

**Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton):** Right on.

**Mr. Scott (Victoria-Haliburton):** This Government is asking to borrow an additional \$14 billion, but the Government has not yet explained the reasons for the borrowing. This mismanagement has brought us to a situation where we can anticipate a deficit this year which will probably be around \$30 billion over the year.

The Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde) and the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) may feel comfortable talking about owing billions of dollars. I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, I do not nor do most Canadians. It is inconceivable to most of us what a billion dollars really means. At big-buck Mac's rate of \$800 a day for chairing the Commission on the Economy, he could work for approximately 1,250,000 days or 3,425 years on \$1 billion. That is 102,750 years on \$30 billion. Calculated at 14 per cent interest, the annual interest on that \$30 billion amounts to \$4.2 billion. Mr. Macdonald could survive on that for 14,385 years. This gives us some concept of what a billion dollars really is.

A figure more understandable to most Canadians is \$6,100. That figure represents something just below the poverty level for a single-income family as established by the Senate report in 1981. It is also the cost to Canadian taxpayers of the salaries of the commissioners for each day the Macdonald Commission sits. Does the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Miss Bégin) sleep comfortably at night knowing that this amount is slightly more than a single senior citizen would see on full pension and full supplement for one full year? Or does this Government simply write off this discrepancy to the cost of patronage? At \$6,100 a day a big-buck Mac commission is no bargain.

In 1980 this Government was elected to run this country. It made all sorts of promises. It was not elected to hire Royal commissions to run the country after it made a mess of it for the last three years. The Canadian people must look at this. We all remember the promises in the 1980 election campaign. On January 12, 1980, the Prime Minister stated that he would hold the line on Government growth under the rate of the Gross National Product; the deficit would be reduced in a phased and orderly fashion; any new expenditure programs to meet the evolving needs and requirements of Canadians would be financed by re-allocating existing expenditures or by increases in revenues; that his Government would not add to the deficit by adding new programs. Of course, this is now a joke. The Gross National Product of 13.5 per cent in 1982 spending grew by 16.7 per cent. If Bill C-131 is approved, Old Age Security payments will increase in the second quarter of 1983 by only 1.2 per cent, which is the equivalent of only a 4.8 per cent yearly increase.

● (1650)

How can the Government explain to senior citizens why they are being held to an increase well below 6 per cent when the

### *Borrowing Authority*

Government is creating what amounts to a new program costing more per day than seniors receive per year, especially in light of the statement of the Prime Minister? How can the Government justify an increase in the deficit, as Bill C-143 will permit, caused by events such as the creation of this Commission, after reading that statement?

My constituency has a population of approximately 90,000 people, of whom approximately 60,000 are eligible voters. Labour Canada statistics show that in January of this year, the employment to population ratio in my area was approximately 49 per cent. I think it is therefore legitimate to say that the maximum number of taxpayers would be approximately 29,400.

These taxpayers share the burden of the near \$30 billion deficit, with their share being approximately \$110,160,000. This works out to an amount of \$3,746.96 per taxpayer. In other words, the Government of Canada has run up a debt on behalf of each taxpayer in my constituency of almost \$4,000. They are the ones who will ultimately have to pay the interest on the debt. At 14 per cent, a competitive rate for a personal loan these days, they will be paying around \$525 this year in taxes just for this purpose. That is what the deficit means to Canadians. They are paying extra taxes because the Government has mismanaged the economy of Canada.

In Bill C-143, the Government is asking Parliament to give consent to keep on misusing public funds. Tacitly, the Government is requesting us to approve a deficit, the scope of which most of us cannot even imagine. As if that were not bad enough, it is also requesting permission to run up a similar deficit in the next fiscal year, whether we need it or not. This House, my friends, is not a rubberstamp designed to approve the Government's every whim. This is the executive boardroom of the nation. We are expected to analyze proposed legislation in a representative and fair manner. How can we do so when this legislation lacks detail and purpose? It also proposes to bankrupt our country. I urge the Minister of Finance to withdraw the Bill in its present form.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Forrestall:** Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might call it five o'clock.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is there agreement to calling it five o'clock?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** It being five o'clock p.m., this House stands adjourned until Monday next at eleven o'clock a.m. pursuant to Standing Order 2(1).

At 4.55 p.m. the House adjourned, without question put, pursuant to Standing Order.